

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CCO-00 CIAE-00 OTPE-00 EB-11 FCC-03

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AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

UNCLAS JIDDA 1721

E.O.: 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETEL, BEXP, SA

SUBJ: SAG TELECOMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENT

1. PACE OF SAG MINISTRY COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY IN AREA OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS APPEARS TO BE PICKING UP. SAUDI GROUP IS CURRENTLY EN ROUTE TO WASHINGTON TO FINALIZE PURCHASE OF TWO MOBILE SATELLITE GROUND STATIONS FROM COMSAT GENERAL (FOR DELIVERY WITHIN FOUR MONTHS) TO PROVIDE INTERIM SERVICE PENDING CONSTRUCTION OF PERMANENT STATIONS. REPORTED PRICE OF MOBILE STATIONS IS \$2.5 MILLION.

2. DEPUTY MINISTER OMAR FAQIEH HAS TOLD EMBOFF THAT MINISTRY OF SIGNING CONSULTANCY CONTRACT WITH ARTHUR D. LITTLE.

3. MINISTRY PRESENTLY IN PROCESS OF SELECTING CONSULTANTS FOR SECOND AND THIRD STAGES (ESTIMATED TOTAL OF \$60-90 MILLION) OF "BACKBONE" COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK. WORK, INCLUDING MICROWAVE LINKS, MAY BEGIN IN 1975. DAMMAM-RIYADH MICROWAVE LINK ESTIMATED AT \$10 TO 15 MILLION.

4. OTHER PROJECTS UNDER ACTIVE PLANNING ARE FOR EXPANSION OF TELEX AND TELEPHONE SYSTEMS. ONE MAJOR ELEMENT OF

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EXPANSION WILL BE INSTALLATION OF LOCAL TELEPHONE EX-

CHANGES IN MANY TOWNS TO TIE THEM INTO BACKBONE SYSTEMS.

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